



# LAST DANCE

BY JEFF CROOK

## To die for

Artwork by Mark Nelson  
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*Jeff writes: "I have recently had the good fortune to return to college to complete my degree. By the time of this publication, I will have moved back to Memphis and begun the last 36 hours of my college education. I would like to thank my wife for making this possible by finally graduating herself. Maybe now she can get a job. (Just kidding.)"*

"Last Dance" is an AD&D® RAVENLOFT® adventure for 4-7 player characters of 2nd-4th levels (about 16 total levels). As always, a well balanced party works best, but a thief should take part. The adventure is set in the city of Pont-à-Museau in the domain of Richemulot in the demi-plane of dread. Jerretiere, the estate on which the adventure is set, is located in the northeast corner of the city, directly over an underground canal that flows into the Musarde River. With revisions to the beginning, the adventure could be set as a small island domain lost in the mists.

The DM should be familiar with the general rules explored in the RAVENLOFT *Realm of Terror* boxed set. Pay particular attention to horror checks and the effects on magic in Ravenloft.

Since the villain in this adventure is not the lord of a domain and does not yet wield any special powers such as would be granted by the Dark Powers of Ravenloft, this adventure could be altered to fit any standard campaign world. With revisions, it would fit especially well in the Gothic Earth setting of *Masque of the Red Death*, in a city such as Paris or New Orleans.

### For the Players

The PCs are approached by a tall, somber fellow who is looking for adventurers. Where this initial meeting takes place is up to the DM. The standard old chestnut is to have the PCs approached while lounging about an inn. In the encounter described below, the PCs are strolling down an avenue in Pont-à-Museau.

As you turn a corner, you enter Rue de Cordone, where the lords and ladies of Pont-à-Museau stroll on summer afternoons. This afternoon is no different. The walks are crowded with nobles and wealthy merchants. Some of these fine people are closely followed by their bodyguards, swaggering bravos in shining mail, while not a few of the wealthier lords wear

their jewel-studded swords openly. The rich and elite exchange pleasantries and jostle silken sleeves and skirts as they pass, while the alleys ring with the cries of beggars.

In many places, the cafe tables spill out into the street, forcing both strollers and carriages to detour. The ancient trees that line this avenue spread their heavy boughs over all, and as the sun dips toward the horizon and the westerly breeze blows in from the river, the street is dappled by a shifting golden light. Somewhere in the distance, you hear a languorous iron bell toll six times.

With a jangle of harness and a steady clop-clop of hooves, a black carriage passes down the street. You notice that it pulls to the side and its driver dismounts, but rather than open the carriage door, he fixes his dark eyes upon you and approaches. He is a tall thin man with heavy brows and a long hooked nose. As he comes nearer, you see that his dark jacket, though brushed and clean, is frayed at the cuffs, and the knees of his trousers are worn thin. There is a queer smell about this man, but you cannot identify the odor.

He stops before you and says, "Madame Tuvache wishes to speak with you in her carriage." He indicates with a bony finger the black carriage parked down the street.

If the PCs ask questions before being led to the carriage, the chauffeur repeats that Madame Tuvache wishes to speak with them, adding that he believes it is about a commission for an adventure. If the PCs refuse to meet with Madame Tuvache at this time, at least two more attempts should be made (one later that evening and another the following day) before she decides that the PCs are too wary to become manageable victims.

If the PCs agree to meet with Madame Tuvache, the chauffeur leads them to the carriage and opens the door. The carriage seats four people including Madame Tuvache, so any extra PCs must wait outside. Madame speaks with the PCs only if they agree to enter and sit in her carriage. As an excuse, she claims that she is a clock-maker and that long years of work over tiny instruments have made her eyes extremely sensitive to light. Read or paraphrase the following only after the PCs have entered the carriage:

The chauffeur closes the door, and you feel the carriage rock and sway as he climbs up to his seat at the front. The interior of the carriage is black as pitch, with dark curtains shrouding all the windows, so that only a pale gray light filters through the fabric. As your eyes become adjusted to the darkness of the carriage, you see a short, middle-aged woman of ponderous girth, dressed in a long black gown. Her dark eyes peer out at you from the depths of her chubby face, and her iron-gray hair is piled high upon her head giving her an additional foot of height. "What a formidable-looking lot you are," she says in a slow drawl.

The interview with Madame Tuvache should be played with great care. The PCs should not get the feeling that they are being lured to their deaths, but at the same time they should feel that something is not quite right. Before stating her case and asking for the PCs' help, Madame asks for their names and inquires about their origins, professions, previous experiences, etc. She often dotes upon a particular PC, telling him how interesting it must be to be a wizard (priest, etc.).

Madame Tuvache is 4' 5" tall in her stocking feet, but for the interview she wears 3" high-heeled pointy shoes. She weighs a ponderous 160 lbs. (thus her slow movement rate); in her ankle-length black evening dress, she looks like a large cannonball. Her iron-gray hair is piled into a foot-tall beehive held together by jeweled pins (17, worth 25 gp each) and a silvery fine-mesh net (worth 10 gp); this makes her hair look like it is pasted together with spider webs. She wears a long string of pearls (180 gp) wrapped three times below her chin. She also wears a simple wedding band (35 gp) which she took from a previous victim. Her eyes are dark brown and almost buried in the flesh of her face; she applies generous amounts of mascara to draw them out. She paints her lips bright red and rouges her cheeks heavily, but this only serves to emphasize her pallid flesh. Long years spent in near total darkness have turned her skin fish-belly white. As a result of the touch of the Dark Powers, she prefers the darkness and shies away from bright lights. Madame Tuvache has one of those accents that makes it nearly impossible to place her origin. During the interview in the carriage,

Madame rests her hands on a small iron chest lying on her lap. The chest is locked and contains five bags. Each bag holds 75 gold pieces.

**Madame Araby Tuvache:** AL LE; AC 10; MV 6; 0-level human; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; S 6, D 13, C 14, I 17, W 11, Ch 14; ML 12; XP 175; small stiletto dagger (1-2/1).

Madame Tuvache carries a stiletto (that has been dipped in poison) hidden in her bodice. The poison is silver-mercurium and is made by a local alchemist. This virulent toxin is both poison types E and J, so it can be administered in food or drink or applied to a weapon, with somewhat differing effects (see DMG page 73). In addition, this poison has the magical ability to slay werebeasts. Any weapon coated with silver-mercurium is treated as silver for the purpose of hitting creatures struck only by silver weapons; the victim must save vs. poison or die. Necessarily, this rare poison is expensive. A one-ounce vial costs 1,000 gp; this is enough to coat one dagger-sized object for one use, or to poison up to 10 people when administered to food or drink. The poison diffuses nicely in liquid, leaving only a slightly oily appearance and metallic smell, hardly noticeable at all. The secret of its making is known only to the local alchemist (not appearing in this adventure).

The chauffeur is described in greater detail at area 13.

After a short session of small talk, Madame at last comes to her point:

"There is a monster in my basement! Oh, do not fear, for I have locked the door and trapped it inside, but sometimes it creates such a ruckus that I fear I will go out of my mind. Most of my servants have left me, and I am in desperate straits. Won't you help me? I do not know what sort of monster it is, but it does howl so fearfully sometimes, and it growls and sniffs about my cellar door. I have no idea how the thing came to be there. There must be some old secret passage linked to the city's underground canals, but I have no way of knowing. I will pay you well to eliminate this monster."

Madame then opens the chest mentioned above and gives each PC one of the small bags of gold. She continues, saying that if they need weapons, her house is filled with all sorts of old swords and such, which they can take

## Puppetworks of Jerretiére

Madame Tuvache has created an immense puppetworks of preserved human corpses throughout her house. Each corpse has been carefully embalmed by Madame's servant Graves, cut into sections, and meticulously wired together at most joints to allow full movement. The puppet-corpses are attached by thin, almost invisible wires to the preprogrammed movements of the house/machine. When the machine is running, different groups of corpses can be engaged to perform specific actions, whether dancing or dining or fighting. However, these puppets can only follow the preprogrammed actions of the machine, and because of the complexity of even the simplest action, each puppet-corpses can perform only one simple action, repeated endlessly. For example, one warrior-puppet might perform an overhead slash with an axe, while another might thrust with a spear, yet both are incapable of performing any other action without reprogramming. Since all puppet actions are preprogrammed and simple, the PCs may, after one round of observation per puppet, decipher and unravel the limit and scope of

the puppets' action, and so completely avoid them if desired.

In this adventure, some of the puppets are programmed to dance an endless summer waltz or to sit at table mindlessly imitating the actions of eating. These puppets have no attack values. Others are designed specifically for fighting and are used to prevent anyone from escaping the house. These warrior-puppets have weapons wired to their hands, but since they are puppets, any blow they inflict with a weapon lacks power; the damage inflicted depends mainly on the weight and sharpness of the weapon, and is therefore low (1-3 hp damage). Similarly, their Armor Class is poor because they have no ability to avoid a blow. Whenever any puppet suffers damage, its preserved flesh chips and flakes from its skeleton, revealing the yellow bones beneath. When all hit points are lost, either the puppet is damaged beyond effective use, or it has been cut from its strings and falls to the floor. When the PCs first do damage to a puppet, they discover the hideous nature of these creatures and must make a horror check unless they have seen a damaged puppet somewhere else in the house.

and use as they need. Her only desire, she claims, is to have this monster destroyed.

If the PCs agree to help her, she asks them to come to her house tomorrow afternoon:

You cannot miss my house. My old clock tower can be seen from many places around the city, and you can hear it toll the hours for miles around. If you become lost, just ask for Jerretiére — that is my estate — and anyone in the city can direct you to it.

If the PCs ask around about Madame Tuvache before they visit Jerretiére, the following information can be obtained:

♦ Madame lives alone in her dead husband's house; her only servant is the old chauffeur.

♦ There was a rumor many years ago that Madame Tuvache poisoned her husband because of some illicit affair, but it has never been proven.

♦ When Monsieur Tuvache died most of the servants quit. Because there was no public funeral, most people believe that Monsieur Tuvache was buried somewhere on the estate.

♦ About 15 years ago, Madame Tuvache added a clock tower to the southern wing of the house, but the Vistani workers would not talk about what they were doing or what they had seen inside the house.

## For the Dungeon Master

The domain of Richemulot is controlled by Jacqueline Renier, a wererat. In Ravenloft, the lord of a domain wields absolute power within that domain, but there are always creatures and NPCs of lesser degrees of evil who are given certain measures of power by the Dark Powers. Some of these lordlings seem ready to take over whenever the lord of the domain meets his or her demise, while others are content with their own little corner of evil and aspire to nothing greater. Jacqueline Renier is aware of the past actions Madame Tuvache, but she does not yet consider her a threat to her power. Likewise, the PCs' actions during this adventure are unlikely to warrant her attention.

Jerretiére is the ancestral home of the Tuvache family and the setting for

this adventure. Before attempting to play this adventure, the DM should become intimately familiar with Madame Tuvache, her motives and motivations, idiosyncrasies, and methods. The horrors she has witnessed and committed have driven her into the clutches of the Dark Powers of Ravenloft. Now she spends her time luring people to their deaths, all to further her demented schemes. She is a poisoner and mechanical genius, with a mad bent toward the grotesque.

## The Sad Case of Madame Araby Tuvache

Araby Dunsany was 19 years old when she was married against her will to a man she did not know. His name was Renault Tuvache, and because Araby's father owed him money, Renault took the youngest Dunsany daughter in payment. Araby was a talented dancer and the most beautiful and intelligent of the Dunsany daughters, and Renault had seen her at several social events. Renault was a man embraced by the Dark Powers of Ravenloft.

Araby Dunsany found herself in a strange house with a stranger man. Renault was a darkly handsome man, rugged, with mesmerizing eyes. His charms, when he wanted to be charming, were without measure, and soon Araby found herself strangely attracted to him. But although the two were married, Araby rarely encountered her husband. His mysterious comings and goings fired her curiosity, and often she plotted to follow him, but his cruel servants always stopped her. They took great pleasure in locking her in her room, so she would sit at her window and watch for her husband to return. After a few months, she began to fall in love with him, for he was mysterious, he was powerful, and he was the only thing she had.

But in the meantime, she longed for something to entertain her mind. Araby was an extremely intelligent girl, and every hour she spent in the old drafty Tuvache home, wandering from room to room, staring out the windows or spying on the servants, was a drudgery and a toil. Her only refuge was the library, where she spent many a pleasurable hour lost in fanciful romances or learning new sciences. One book in particular fascinated her starved mind. It was a book about clockmaking.



One day, the clock on the mantle in the library stopped running. Araby used what she had learned from the book to repair it. The intricacies of the clockwork mechanism, the interlinking gears and wheels and springs, were to her soul a beauty only rivaled by that of a well-performed ballet; she saw in the clock a rhythm and balance not unlike that of a waltz.

One night, Renault held a grand ball, but he locked Araby in her room. She longed for the pleasure of company and to dance again, but Renault refused her pleas. She sat alone in her room and listened to the music and the laughter, and from her window she watched carriage after carriage stop at the gate, watched beautifully dressed couples dancing on the lawn in the summer moonlight, her husband dancing with other women. She was determined to escape her room and join the ball, so she set herself to opening her door, but it took most of the night to pick the lock. By then the party was almost over.

Quietly, Araby slipped into the hallway. Her ball gown whispered over the polished wooden floors. The music had stopped, but she heard the murmur of conversation from the direction of the ballroom. She glided through the shadows down the hall until she reached the balcony. From its height, she saw her husband and a small group of other revelers suddenly transform into horrid wererats and devour an unwitting, party-goer who had stayed too long. The poor woman's dying screams reverberated through the halls as Araby fled back to her room.

The following day, under the excuse of going to market, Araby visited an alchemist, and with her wedding ring she purchased a vial of silver-mercurium, an insidious poison so powerful it could slay werebeasts, as well as any other living creature. She introduced the poison into the evening meal. By morning she was a widow in control of the Tuvache estate.

To her dismay, she discovered that she was nearly broke and that the estate was in shambles. In desperation she opened a dance academy in the grand ballroom. Her students were few and her desperate venture failed. Most of the servants vanished when Renault died, and Araby was unable to pay those that remained, so all but Graves left her, and he remained only because

he had been with the family since he was a boy. He was a strange, silent man, tall and thin as an undertaker. His frightening face was long and pale, with dark deep-set eyes and a long narrow nose, but he had been the only one of the servants who had not been cruel to Araby. In fact, it was he who had driven her to the alchemist's shop, and he had kept her secret.

One evening, Araby heard a commotion in the basement. She called Graves, and together they warily descended the dark stairs and crossed the cold basement floor. They found a secret door. Behind it lay a passage that led deeper into the earth. The tunnel finally brought them to an underground canal that passed beneath the Tuvache estate. Here they found the cause of the commotion. A group of adventurers had met their fate here, killed by the giant rats that thrive in the underground canals of Pont-à-Museau. Araby was astonished by how much gold she found on the dead bodies, so with Graves' help she stripped them of their belongings and shoved them into the cold water.

As the years passed, Madame Tuvache began to lure people to her basement, where she would lock them in and let the rats have them, only to loot their poor remains. She was eventually embraced by the Dark Powers, and their evil touch drove her ever deeper into madness. Finally, her newly-found wealth inspired a terrible scheme — to recreate the grand ball she had so sadly missed.

### Layout and Design of Jerretiére

Today, the Tuvache house is a giant machine, a product of the genius of Madame Tuvache. A water wheel in the basement powers an intricate machine of gears, pulleys, and shafts, all to drive an immense puppet-works of preserved human corpses. Madame Tuvache, with her knowledge of clockworks, and her servant Graves (who learned *taxidermy*) have created a gigantic mechanical grand ball, complete with music, dancing, and elegant attire. Since the old corpses occasionally wear out or are damaged, she has devised a scheme to lure brave souls to their deaths. She hires out for adventurers to rid her basement of a monster, only to trap them in the deadly place.

When the PCs enter the basement, they find themselves trapped in the

room with a deadly device. If they escape the basement, Madame Tuvache has groups of warrior-puppets and deadly traps to prevent them from escaping the house. As the PCs explore the house they run up against many of her devices and designs, as well as discovering the cast-away goods and last reminders of some of her victims. To keep tabs on anyone intruding on the second level of the house, Madame has created a system of peepholes throughout the attic. Unless otherwise specified, all of the windows are locked, barred, and completely covered by thick drapes and curtains. When she believes that she is safe, Madame Tuvache wanders the house or reads in the library. When on the hunt (or being hunted by the PCs), she retires to room 29 to activate and control her machine. Also, as the PCs explore the house, they can easily keep track of time by the hourly tolling of the clock in the clock tower. It chimes so loudly that it shakes small objects and rattles the window panes. Dust falls from the ceilings, and sometimes framed paintings drop from the walls.

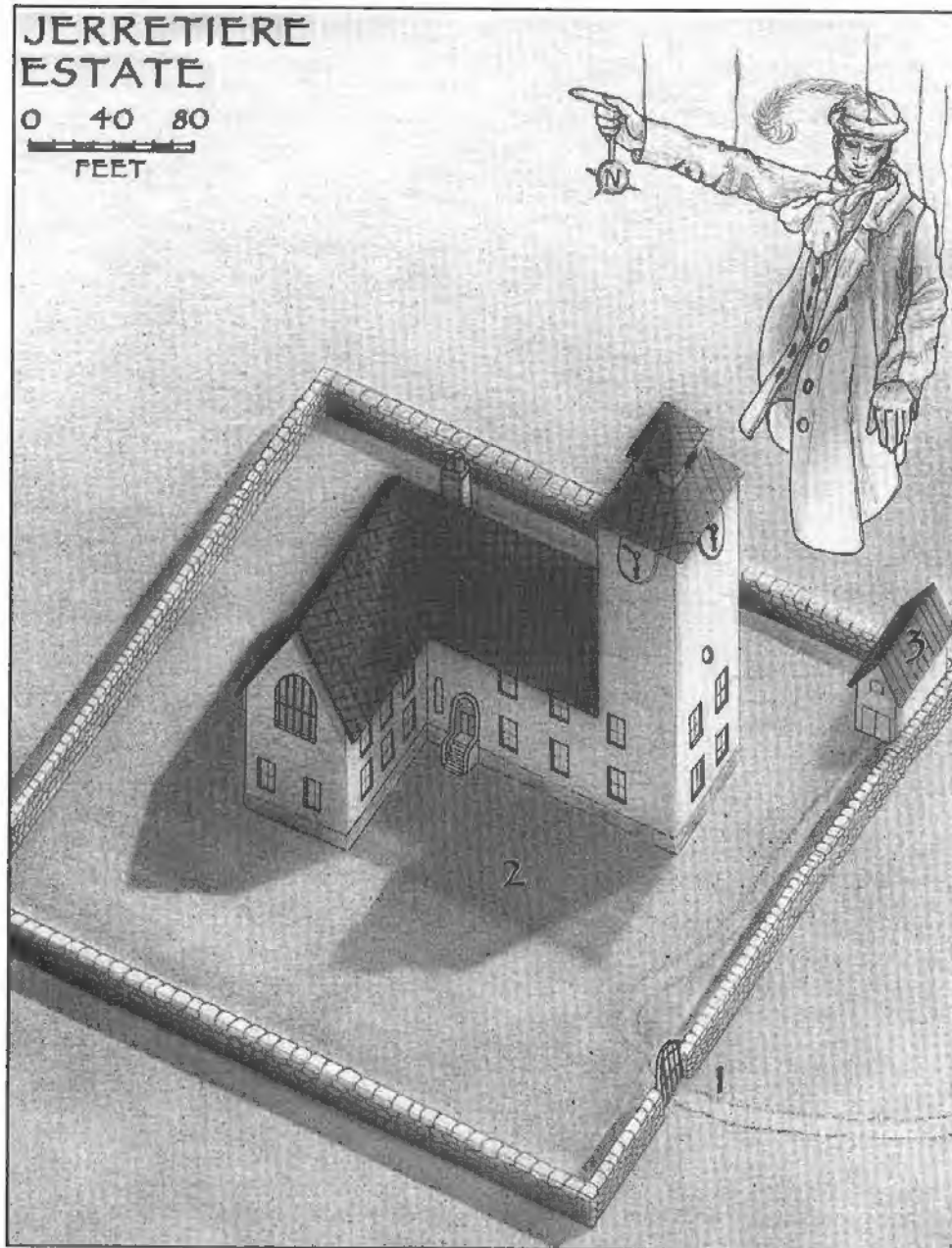
As is usual with any location-based adventure, it may become necessary to alter specific descriptions. For instance, if the PCs decide not to help Madame Tuvache and prefer instead to break into and explore her house, most of the descriptions given below must be altered. If she does not suspect that the PCs are in her house, Madame Tuvache does not remain in the same room waiting for them to encounter her. It is advised, in any case, that sometime during the adventure Madame should activate her machine, perhaps to join the dancers in a summer waltz in the Grand Ballroom. If at any time she learns of the PCs' secret entry, she immediately retreats to her control room (room 29) and activates her machine.

### The Nightmare Has Only Begun

So powerful is Madame's will and spirit that, should she be slain during this adventure, she does not truly die. Instead, the Dark Powers grant her a new life and a new form, that of a Greater Animator. She becomes much more dangerous and difficult to defeat, and as such she warrants the attention of the Lord of Richemulot, Jacqueline Renier (see "Concluding the Adventure").

## JERRETIERE ESTATE

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FEET



As a Greater Animator, Madame Tuvache is referred to as "Jerretiere" in the adventure. After Madame's death, Jerretiere becomes an entity, a physical extension of Madame's malignant will. Within one turn, all parts of the house glow with an eerie blue light. The glow persists for several rounds, growing in intensity until it finally vanishes with a loud bang, as a tremor ripples throughout the estate.

When playing Jerretiere, it is helpful to remember certain aspects of the house and how the adventure works. In

the house, some rooms have a description followed by a possible encounter that occurs only after Madame Tuvache has activated her machine. Also, some rooms have further encounters highlighted in a gray box. These encounters occur only if Madame is slain and her spirit possesses the house. Unlike the role fulfilled by most Greater Animators, Jerretiere has no ward or source of the dark emotions on which to feed. Instead, she finds that she can derive sustenance from the fear and terror of those trapped inside the

house. All her future actions are directed towards maintaining this food source, both by securing her victims inside the house, and by luring new victims to the estate.

**Jerretiere — Greater Animator:** INT exceptional; AL LE; AC varies; MV nil; HD 12; hp 1,000; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1-12; SA spells; SD spell immunity; MR nil; SZ G; ML 14; XP 26,000; *RAVENLOFT MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM Appendix III*, pages 10-13.

She uses her great Strength (19) to slam doors and gates, attempting to smash unwitting PCs in the process; this requires an attack roll and inflicts 1d12 hp damage. She can also hold any door or window open or closed. PCs must match her Strength or make an Open Doors roll to move a held door.

Jerretiere can cast the following innate spell-like powers twice per day at 12th-level ability: *animate dead*, *animate object*, *weather summoning*, *control temperature 10' radius*, *control winds*, *cantrip*, *summon swarm*, and *summon insects*. The text below indicates when some of these powers could be used. Jerretiere can also use these abilities to defend herself against direct attack. For instance, if the PCs attempt to set the house afire, Jerretiere casts *weather summoning* to summon a rainstorm to extinguish the flames.

She is immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and *poison*. Her Armor Class is dictated by the specific part of the house that the PCs are attempting to damage. Wooden doors have an AC of 5, while the iron gate (below) is AC 1. Similarly, a wooden door must suffer 30 hp damage to render its attack ineffective. Jerretiere is aware of everything that happens on the estate; no one can break into the house without her knowing, the PCs cannot whisper their plans without her overhearing (see exception, room 8). Her power to control any moving part of the house or to animate any object or dead creature, extends to the boundary wall of the estate. As indicated below, upon first becoming an Animator, Jerretiere animates certain skeletons and corpses in the house; these are the limit of her *animate dead* spells for the first day. On the following day, she can animate the remainder of the dead in the house, including any slain PCs. The only corpse she does not animate is Renault (see room 15).

## Jerretiere Estate

**1. The Gate.** A path leads from the main road across a lot overgrown with weeds to the gate described below:

The lichen-encrusted stone wall beside the path is just tall enough to prevent anyone from seeing over it into the yard, but it cannot hide the clock tower of a grand old house rising up from the once-stately grounds. A wrought-iron gate hangs on the wall near its southwestern corner. Set in the stone beside the gate is a tarnished bronze plaque that reads "Jerretiere." Below it, half covered in a growth of thorny weeds, lies a rotted wooden sign whose carefully painted red letters have nearly been erased by the years. You can just make out the words "Jerretiere Dance Academy."

The gate is unlocked and in good condition.

### 2. The Grounds

Other than the dead grass and occasional clumps of weeds, the grounds are devoid of vegetation. No trees shelter the house from the harsh rays of the sun, no shrubs or flowers soften its severe lines. A rutted lane leads from the gate to the southeast corner of the estate, where a small carriage-house leans against the outer wall.

The house itself is large and imposing, seeming to loom ever higher as you approach. It is of an ancient design, from its green tiled roof and weather-grayed stucco exterior to its small-paned, iron-barred windows and thick stone foundation. The lofty clock tower rises against the sky, casting its long shadow across the grounds of the estate. Sickly green ivy straggles up its cracked walls, while squawking black rooks flutter in and out of the belfry. The house's many dark windows are covered by thick curtains, as though the occupants wish no sunlight to penetrate the interior.

During the day, Madame's two carriage horses are allowed to roam the grounds and graze on what vegetation they can find. The horses are worth 100 gp each. At night, the horses retire to their stalls on the north side of the carriage house. Early in the morning and late in the evening, Graves can be found here tending the horses.

If the PCs make their escape from

the house, Jerretiere can animate the carriage (see below) and attack them with it.

**3. The Carriage House.** The main doors to the carriage house are kept locked except when the carriage is being used. A small opening above the main doors leads to the loft. On the north side of the building are the stalls for Madame's horses.

#### 3a. Lower Level.

The interior of this building is dark and dusty and smells of hay, manure, and grease. Most of the space here is occupied by a large black carriage; the tack and harnesses have been carefully hung on the north wall. In the southeast corner of the room you see two large barrels; both are filled with oats. Occasionally, a breeze blows through the building, bringing a rain of dust and hay from the loft above. At the rear of the building, a low wall allows a view of the horses' stalls. Here, you also notice a wooden ladder leading up to the loft.

In addition to the items named above, the PCs may find a number of shovels and chopping axes, brushes and curry combs, pitchforks, hammers, and saws. A lantern hangs by the door, but it is empty and must be filled with oil before lighting. A container of lamp oil can be found on a shelf above the barrels of oats. There is nothing else of interest here.

Jerretiere can animate the carriage and use it to attack the PCs. Although the carriage is much too large to be animated entirely, she can animate the front wheels, causing the carriage to roll along the ground, pursuing the PCs in an attempt to crush them beneath its wheels. After opening the doors of the carriage house, the carriage rolls out onto the grounds and attacks the PCs for 12 rounds (spell's duration) or until destroyed.

**Animated Carriage:** INT 0; AL LE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 4; hp 50; THAC0 17; Dmg 3d6; MR nil; SZ L; ML special; XP 175.

**3b. The Loft.** PCs climbing up here find the loft filled with hay. Several coils of copper wire and a bundle of 10'-long bronze rods have been stacked in one corner. Hay is loaded into the loft

through a small hatch at the west side of the building, and dropped to the horses through holes over the stalls.

### First Floor

**4. Grand Hall.** The front door is reached by a short stair; the door frame is set deep into the thick walls of the house. The door is locked, and it has a heavy knocker made of bronze. After the PCs knock on the door, read or paraphrase the following:

It is not long before you hear a bolt sliding back, followed by the turning of a key in a lock. Slowly the door swings open, revealing the tall somber chauffeur. He steps back, motioning for you to enter. The interior of the house is dark, and the servant has a tall yellow candle to light the way. "Madame will be along directly," he says slowly.

The servant directs you to an arrangement of couches set in the center of the north half of the room. As your eyes become adjusted to the faint light of his candle, you see the quaint antique style of the room's furnishings — the gilded mirror now smoky with age and dust, the curio propped up at one corner with a brick because its carved leg is broken. A tall clock stands against the wall beside the staircase. Its shiny pendulum is still, and the hour hand is missing.

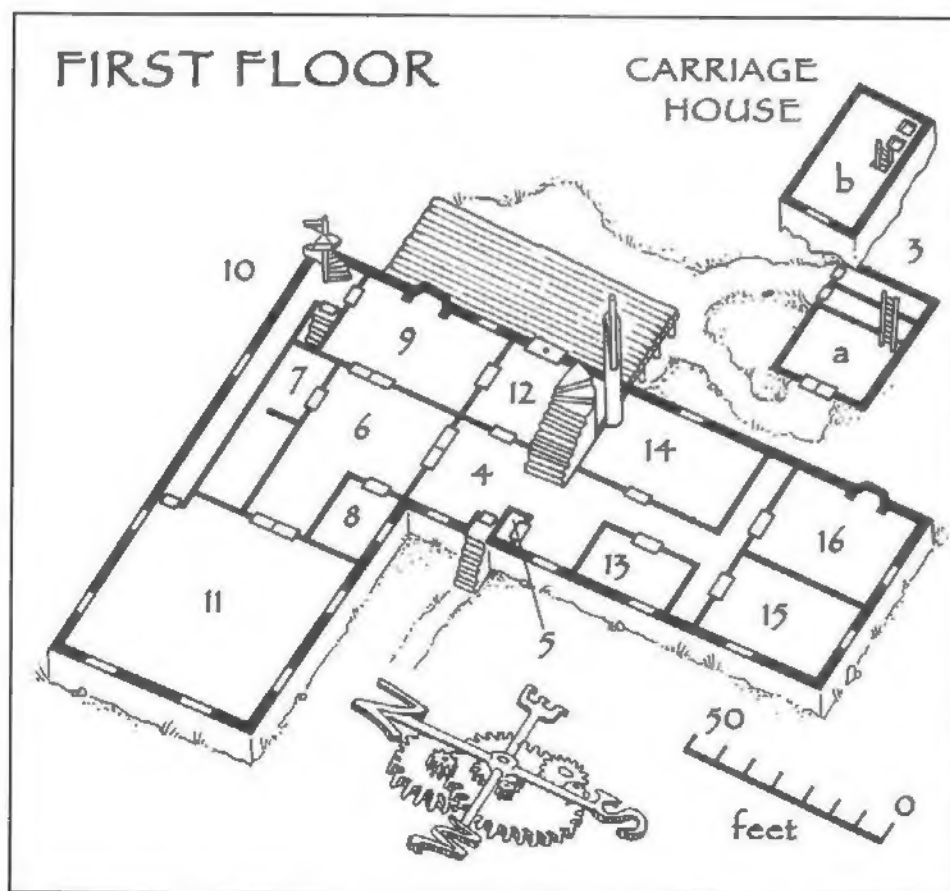
The couches are arranged for conversation, and it is to these ancient seats that the servant leads you. The servant stands aside and silently waits.

Soon, you hear a voice call from above, "Welcome! Welcome to Jerretiere!" Despite the shadows, you cannot miss the dark squat form of your hostess as she ponderously descends the large ornate staircase winding away into the shadows of the east side of the room, opposite the entryway. "I am indeed glad you have come. I fear I could not spend another night in this house, dear as it is to me."

Even in the middle of the day, this room, like most of the others, is cloaked in darkness by the heavy curtains that cover the windows.

Madame asks the PCs if there is anything they need before they begin. She sends Graves to fetch torches or weapons as needed. There is a 50%





chance that he brings the magical *short sword* +1 found in the Cloak Room (area 25) if the PCs ask specifically for a short sword. If asked only for a sword, the chance is reduced to 20%. Neither Graves nor Madame has any idea of the sword's magical properties.

When the PCs indicate that they are ready to see to her monster, Madame leads them to area 10. Should the PCs escape the cellar, she retires to room 29 to activate her machine. Once Madame has activated her machine, PCs entering the Grand Hall encounter the following:

As you approach the exit, you hear a strange clicking and whirring. At the same time, armed warriors drop down from the balcony above. As they move toward you, their weapons weave a deadly net of steel in the dark air. Their faces seem frozen into hideous grins, and you notice that they move stiffly, if relentlessly, to the attack.

**Warrior-puppets** (8): MV 6; AC 10; HD 1-4 hp; hp 3 (x4), 2 (x3), 1; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; XP 7 (see Sidebar for other information); short sword (x2),

dagger (x3), spear, hand axe, bastard sword.

Once their pattern has been learned the warrior-puppets here can be avoided. As described in the Sidebar, when the PCs first cause damage to a puppet, they discover the hideous nature of these creatures and must make a horror check.

Inside the curio are seven porcelain figurines of dancers worth 35 gp each. Besides being too cumbersome to be considered loot, the mirror is almost worthless, and the clock is non-functional.

Jerretiere uses her *animate dead* ability to animate the warrior-puppets, recreating them into undead. Even if the PCs have already encountered and destroyed the puppets, the shattered parts are rejoined and rise as 1HD undead. If still attached to the machine, they break free of their wires before attacking.

**Undead-puppets** (8): INT non-; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SD see below; MR nil; SZ M; ML special; XP 65; MM/315.

Undead are immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and cold-based spells. They never check morale.

**5. Closet.** This small closet contains a few moldy old cloaks and a great quantity of spider webs. Renault Tuvache's old cane sword is propped in one corner (worth 50 gp because of the ornate ivory handle).

#### 6. Hall of Trophies.

The mounted skulls and horns of scores of dead beasts cover the walls. Skins and hides carpet the floor and adorn the walls. Running almost the entire length of the northern wall is the flayed and stretched hide of some enormous serpent. Beside the double doors in the east wall hangs a stunning shield made entirely of brilliant rainbow-hued feathers. But the dust and the yellowed bone and moth-eaten furs betray the former grandeur of this room; time dulls the horns and erases the glory of forgotten hunts.

The trophies are badly deteriorated and worthless.

PCs entering this area when the machine is running hear the sound of a piano and the scuffle and scrape of shoes coming from beyond the double doors which lead to area 11.

Jerretiere uses her *animate dead* ability to animate the trophy heads lining the walls. Although the heads have little value as attacking monsters, PCs witnessing the animated heads must make a horror check.

**Undead trophy heads** (12): INT 0; AL N; AC 8; MV 0; HD 1/4; hp 2 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; MR nil; SZ S; ML special; XP 15.

The heads are attached to the walls and have little range of movement. They attack with horns, antlers, or teeth. They never check Morale. They are immune to *charm*, *sleep*, and cold-based spells.

**7. Ladies' Lounge.** A faded sign on the door to this room reads "Ladies Only." When Madame Tuvache started her dance academy, she had this room converted into a ladies' powder room. A peep hole in the western wall allowed the ladies to spy on their dance partners in area 11. A giant mirror faces the entry door.

Jerretiere can communicate through the mirror in this room. Once per day, Madame Tuvache's face appears in the mirror to pronounce the doom of any intruders. For example, she might say to the PCs, "You thought it would be easy to destroy me, but now I am more powerful than you could ever dream!" Her face then fades from the glass as her laughter echoes through the house.

**8. Gentlemen's Lounge.** The faded sign on this door reads "Gentlemen." This was the original privy of the house, and became the Gentlemen's Lounge when Madame Tuvache opened her dance academy. A small window looks out at the front entry. The window is covered in heavy drapes.

This is the only room in the house where the PCs are completely safe from Jerretiere. Because the strict taboos of polite society are so deeply ingrained in her psyche, she cannot cross the boundaries of the Gentlemen's Lounge. She cannot hear anything said in this room and she cannot stop anyone from opening its small window and escaping the house.

### 9. The Library.

The smells of old leather and moldy parchment pervade this room, giving it an ancient, scholarly odor. The shelves lining the walls are filled with a treasure of old books and cracked parchment scrolls. Many of the books are supported by strange bookends, curios collected from countless places over many generations. There are skulls of beasts and men, large stones both shaped and unshaped; some are as black and misshapen as fallen stars; others seem to be pieces looted from ancient forgotten ruins. There are strange statuettes and idols, and exquisite potteries which could have been made only by a master.

In the center of the room, two high-backed leather chairs are arranged to take advantage of the large fireplace. A small clock ticks on the mantle, while a coal-fire burns on the hearth, lighting the room with a warm glow, but casting the corners into deepest shadow.

The objects hinted at in the boxed text only have value to the proper collector. None of these "collectibles" are worth more than 150 gp, and there are 8 such pieces in this room. The books

cover a variety of subjects, but none are arcane or deal with forbidden or mystical subjects. The scrolls are various scholarly works: monographs on scientific or political subjects, the occasional love poem or letter, proper techniques for embalming, etc.

If the PCs investigate the clock on the mantel, they find a drawer beneath the clockface. In the drawer is a scroll with the 3rd-level priest spell *speak with dead*. Priest PCs can read this scroll with their standard chance of failure if they are not of a high enough level (see *DMG*, page 145); if the spell fails and a harmful or reverse effect is indicated, an *animate dead* spell is cast instead. The dead rises as a 3HD undead creature and attacks the priest. In any case, casting this spell requires a Powers check.

**10. Servants' Hall.** This narrow hall allows unobtrusive access to all social areas of the house. The spiral stairs lead up 20' to area 23, while the cellar stairs lead down 30' to area 17. A small door by the stairs opens into the library (area 9), and the door at the top of the cellar stairs is usually locked. The door at the west end of the hall leads into room 11.

### 11. The Grand Ballroom.

This large barren room is dominated by a huge painting hanging on the western wall below a large shrouded window. The painting is better than ten-feet long and almost as tall and it is framed in heavy, carved oak which has been painted gold. The painting depicts a boar hunt in the woods. Dogs maul the stricken beast while a dark, powerfully-built man riding a black war horse leans in to deal death with his sword. The artist has reproduced the man's maniacal grin to a frightening degree. Time has barely touched this painting, for it looks to have been tended with great care.

The window above the painting is also large but it, and the other windows, are hidden by heavy dark drapes and curtains. The ceiling is high but the shadows above hint at a strangely shaped ceiling. To the east is a balcony from which hangs a dark tapestry woven with abstract designs. Between the two windows in the south wall stands an old battered upright piano.

This room's marble floor has been worn into paths by the passing of many feet. The paths form concentric circles which cover the entire room, rather like the marks left on ice by the passing of skaters. Other than the double doors, the only other apparent exit is a small servants' door in the northeast corner.

The painting has little value; it exists only as a curiosity and a glimpse of Renault Tuvache. However, if moved to the right, a small lever is exposed. The lever causes the "dancing couples" (see below) to be raised while a single male puppet (Madame's dance partner) is lowered. The ceiling is more than 50' high; if it is illuminated, the PCs see the exposed machine — an intricate conglomeration of bronze and iron gears, wheels, rods, and pulleys, as well as 16 dancer-puppets (described below) dangling from their nearly-invisible wires. If an attempt is made to pull the piano away from the wall, the PCs find it firmly attached. They can move it just enough to glimpse a bronze rod protruding from the wall into the piano. This rod is attached to the machine and drives the piano's mechanism.

If the PCs enter the room while the machine is in operation, read the following:

The hall is flooded with the sound of a summer waltz. The dancers seem to take no notice of you. A stiff-backed figure dressed in a military uniform sits at a piano, playing for the dozen or more dancers circling the floor in a whirling phantasm of faded finery and cracked, peeling faces. It is a grand ball, with ladies dressed in the highest fashion of a bygone day and men in their best military dress, but the hands that clasp so eagerly are crudely sewn together by copper wires, the smiling faces are broken and shattered like porcelain masks, revealing naked yellow bone beneath, and the beautiful gowns and sharp military regalia hang sadly on bodies that should have long ago been laid in their graves.

Sixteen dancer-puppets keep time to the mad schemes of Madame Tuvache. PCs should make a horror check at this point, as these preserved human corpses have begun to break apart and flake, revealing bone. If the PCs have already experienced the scene in the Dining Room (area 26) or have battled



any warrior-puppets, allow a +2 bonus to their horror checks. The dancers have no attack value; any hit destroys them. The corpse at the piano is not really playing; the piano plays itself while the corpse mimics the movements of playing.

## 12. Tea Room.

This is perhaps the sunniest room in the house. No draperies or curtains hide the door in the east wall. The door is made of yellow glass, allowing plenty of amber light to filter into this room, but heavy iron bars prevent anyone from smashing the glass and entering the house. The door leads outside onto a raised wooden deck. The room is furnished as a tea or breakfast room, with a small round table surrounded by four wooden chairs. Dust coats the table like a fine gray linen.

In the northwest corner of the room, there is a small chest made of fine cedar with bronze fittings. The chest contains a silver tea set, but it is heavily tarnished. Cleaned, the set is worth 150 gp. The exit door is locked and trapped at all times. The trap breaks a tiny vial of poison that spills upon the lockpicker's hands unless a save vs. breath weapon is made (poison type M, contact).

Jerretiere is able to spray the poison from the trapped lock on the door. Any PC who moves within 5' of the door must make a save vs. breath weapon to avoid being hit by the spraying poison. Those who fail suffer the consequences described above. The poison can be sprayed only once.

## 13. Graves' Room.

The door sticks somewhat, but opens with a shove. Within, you see a small bedroom that looks to have been recently occupied. Its floor is swept, and the corners are free of cobwebs. The only articles of furniture are a simple wood-frame bed and a chair, over which is draped a black jacket neatly brushed but frayed at the cuffs and worn thin at the elbows. On the wall above the chair are some peculiar brown stains running down from the ceiling.

The brown stains are from blood that seeped through the floor from area 30 above, while corpses were being readied for the preservation vat.

This small bedroom, once reserved for minor guests, is now the residence of Madame's loyal servant Graves. During the day, Graves is always with Madame Tuvache or somewhere near at hand. However, late at night he can be found asleep in this room, and at dusk and dawn he tends the horses in the carriage house. Therefore, Graves is not placed in any specific room and should be allowed to sneak about the house keeping an eye on the PCs. The DM might allow the PCs the chance to catch him before they have a final encounter with Madame and so learn her tragic history, or the PCs might not find Graves until after Madame is destroyed or caught, in which case he willingly tells them of her tragic descent into madness.

**Graves:** AL LN; AC 10; MV 9; 0-level human male; 4 hp; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; S 10, D 9, C 13, I 14, W 11, Ch 9; ML 13; XP 7.

If threatened, Graves begs for mercy. He attacks only if the life of Madame Tuvache is threatened, and then he uses any weapon at hand. He does not have any treasure. Graves keeps a massive ring containing keys for every door lock in the house, including exit doors.

Graves knows the full history of Madame. Graves is not a thoroughly evil man, but in the service of his mistress he has committed severe crimes against humanity. He is deeply sorry for his crimes and would like to stop, but as long as Madame continues, so will he.

Graves no longer wishes to serve his Mistress after she becomes Jerretiere. He does not understand this strange transformation. Although he has been a loyal servant for many years, Jerretiere is not averse to killing Graves should he try to help the PCs escape. However, given time he agrees to do her bidding, luring new victims to the house for Madame to torment and slay.

## 14. The Master's Bedroom. The door to this room is locked.

More than any other room in the house, this room is stiflingly close, as if it has not been opened in a hundred years. The heavy door groans on its hinges, stirring up clouds of dust and a cloying, sepulchral odor.

Once the dust settles, you see a man's bedchamber. The furnishings are spartan, heavy, serviceable, but exceedingly old, caked with dust and

shrouded with spider webs. The room is designed rather like a hunting camp, with the large canopied bed serving as a tent, and canvas-backed chairs arranged in a circle around a low table upon which still lay, beneath a blanket of dust, a deck of playing cards. In the southeast corner stands a rack of weapons and a manikin supporting a suit of plate mail armor, while the shadows of the southwest corner hide a small camp desk and folding stool.

The cards are ordinary, their faces faded by time. The weapons are all of the hunting variety, including spears, javelins, a long bow and quiver with 12 fowling arrows (damage 1-2/1), and a boar sword (treat as a two-handed sword) depicted in the painting in the Grand Ballroom. All of the weapons are in terrible shape and must be worked by a weaponsmith before being used (wooden shafts snap at first use, metal blades are rusty and dull). The armor is similarly deteriorated; it needs work by an armorer at a cost of 1,000 gp before it can safely be worn (joints stick, belts and fasteners break). The camp desk contains nothing of interest.

If the PCs investigate the canopied bed, they find its skeletal occupant. Here lies Renault Tuvache, still wearing his rotted pajamas, still lying where he died in agony from the poison administered by his wife, Madame Tuvache. If they use the *Speak with Dead* spell scroll found in the library, Renault tells of his untimely and ultimate demise at the hands of his wife. He also warns the PCs against harming Madame Tuvache, saying that she cannot truly be slain. He warns that, should she die, Araby will become a creature of terrible power and evil.

## 15. Guest Bedroom.

The rank air that exudes like a foul breath upon the opening of the door is musty and choked with clouds of dust. It is some time before you can enter.

Inside is evidence of a terrible crime. On a small table beside the unmade bed, you see a crystal goblet, its sides stained dark brown by some old liquid, and spiderwebs connect it in a solid mass to the bottle beside it.

The entire wall beside the bed is covered by a huge splattered, brown stain. The sheets of the bed are also stained, as is the dusty carpet. In one

corner of the room stands a small round table and two chairs. On the table sits a tarnished silver platter heaped with old bones. The bones are human, and they look well gnawed.

The bones are the remains of the woman devoured during Renault Tuvache's last party. Although she was slain in the Grand Ballroom, she was eaten here. Because of the violence and horror of her death, the woman's geist still inhabits this room. As a general rule, the geist makes herself visible to only one of the PCs, usually the one who makes the most thorough search of the room. The DM should either take the chosen player aside or slip him a note with the following description:

As you bend down and look under the bed, you are shocked to discover a woman's head; her long brown hair flows about her bloody severed head, and even more horrible, her eyes are open wide and her mouth gapes as if she wishes to speak.

The PC must make a save vs. fear or flee the room. Likewise, a horror check is in order. But even more disturbing, the other PCs cannot see the geist. When they look under the bed they see only cobwebs and dust kittens.

**Geist:** INT average; AL N; AC 10; MV fly 12; HD nil; hp nil; THACO nil; #AT none; Dmg none; SA sight causes panic; SD invulnerable; MR 100%; SZ M; ML fearless; XP 0; *RAVENLOFT MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM Appendix III/45.*

## 16. Guest Bedroom.

The cold hearth and dank, odorous ashes speak of the years that have passed since anyone spent an evening in this bedroom. The lush carpet has faded, the rich furniture grown gray with the gathering dust. The window here, like the others in the house, is heavily shrouded by dark curtains.

An empty crystal decanter sits atop the heavy oak desk in a corner by the fireplace. The blankets on the bed have been turned back, revealing time-yellowed sheets.

The PCs may notice a large dark stain on the carpet beside the bed where something was recently spilled. Those with acute senses of smell instantly recognize the stain as red wine. Of even greater interest, an empty wine bottle may be found where it rolled under the



bed. An adventurer foolishly drank poisoned wine given to him by Madame, dropped the bottle and spilled its contents, then died beside the bed. Underneath the desk, the PCs may find his scroll of *protection against poison*, which he tried and failed to read before he died. Madame missed the scroll when she came to collect the body.

The crystal decanter is worth 65 gp. A careful examination of the fireplace reveals that the chimney was bricked up some years ago. Any attempt to build a fire in the fireplace fills the room with smoke.

## The Basement

**17. Cellar.** Careful time should be kept from the moment the PCs enter this room:

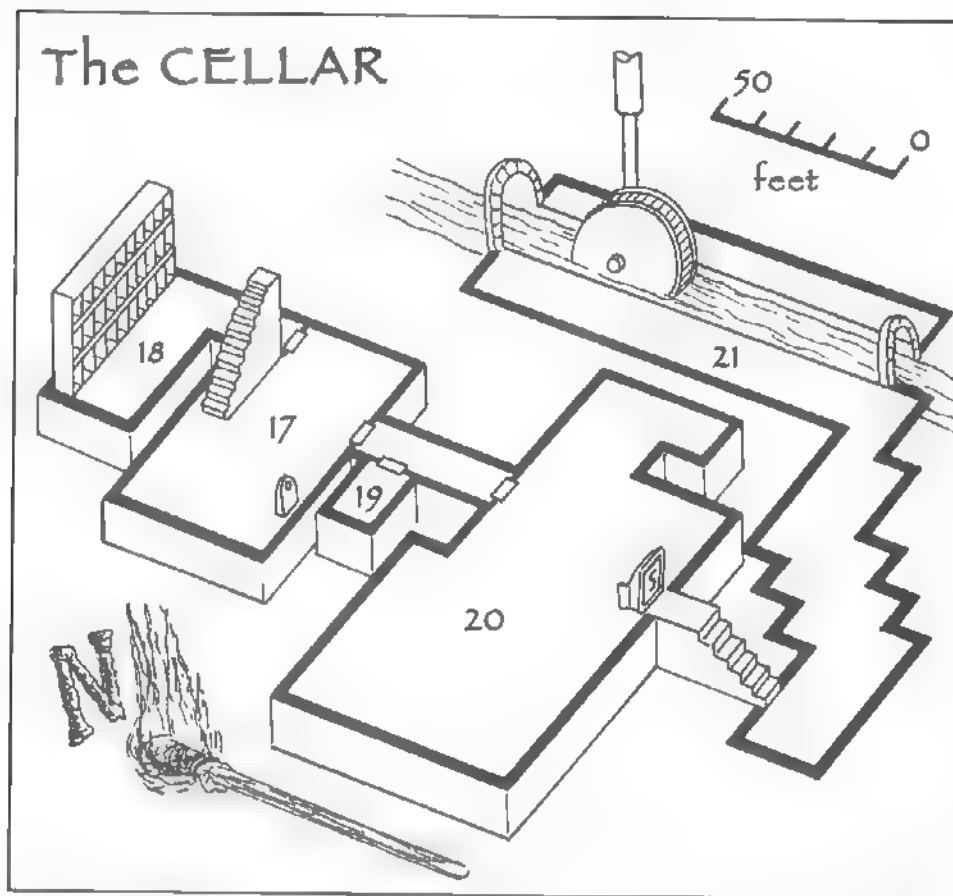
The steep steps are slick with moisture, and water seeps from between the stones of the walls. Pools of water have collected on the uneven stone floor. Except for a storage cabinet standing against the south wall, this section of the basement appears empty.

Both doors in this room are locked, as is the door at the top of the stairs (Madame silently locks it behind the PCs). The PCs quickly discover that they are trapped, and their loudest calls receive no answer. The doors can be opened with a successful Open Doors roll, or they can be bashed or hacked open with weapons.

If the PCs stop and listen, they hear a ticking noise coming from a cabinet standing against the south wall. Inside the cabinet is a time bomb built by Madame, but the PCs may not immediately recognize its danger (a Wisdom or Intelligence check reveals the nature of the device, but not necessarily how to defuse it). The mechanism is a quaint old clock. No matter what time it really is, when the PCs first enter this room the clock reads five minutes to midnight; thereafter they have five rounds to discover the bomb and stop it.

Read the following when the players open the cabinet:

# The CELLAR



Inside the cabinet, you discover a strange old clock. The time reads a few minutes before midnight. To one side of the clock face, there is a glass ball filled with some sort of blue liquid. A small track leads away from the ball and around the base of the clock to a tiny figure of a dwarf holding a hammer.

When midnight strikes, the tiny dwarf slides around the track to the glass ball. He rings out the time on the ball with his hammer. Unless the PCs stop him, on the seventh strike, the glass ball shatters, spilling the liquid which quickly forms a poisonous cloud of gas, entirely filling the room in two rounds. The poison is deadly, and the PCs must save vs. poison or die. If the PCs make their saving throws, they still suffer 2-20 hp damage per round spent in the cloud. The glass ball cannot be removed without breaking it, but if a soft surface (such as a finger) is placed between it and the dwarf's hammer, it does not shatter. The clock could also be turned back to delay the time bomb.

The poison cloud lingers for 1 turn before dissipating. The cloud also fills areas 18 and 19. In area 20 it covers the floor to a depth of only a few inches. Unless the PCs actually get down on the floor and sniff it, they suffer no harm. On the other hand, the rats in room 20 run in terror as soon as the poisonous gas enters the room. A few of them are caught within the cloud and die, allowing the PCs to discover the nature of the gas.

If the PCs do not discover the bomb within five rounds, read or paraphrase the following:

You hear a strange rhythmic clinking noise coming from the cabinet standing against the south wall. Suddenly, something shatters, and a cloud of blue gas pours through the cracks of the cabinet.

Madame Tuvache waits for one hour before checking on the PCs. If she hears nothing, she unlocks the door and waits another half hour before descending the stairs accompanied by Graves.

## 18. Wine Cellar.

The north wall of this room is dominated by a huge wine rack, but most of its slots have long been empty. Now, centipedes rule the dark recesses meant to hold precious bottles of wine, while woodworms have turned many of the shelves into fragile lace-like sculptures barely able to support the dust coating them. Only a few old bottles remain, their labels obscured by thick layers spider webs. At the foot of the wine rack sits a small chest with a tiny silver lock; rats have chewed a hole through its wooden side.

There are three bottles of wine. One is ruined and worthless, the other two are worth 75 gp and 90 gp. The small chest contains an old rat's nest and two intact crystal goblets (among a heap of shattered ones) worth 20 gp each. Each goblet is etched with the Tuvache family crest. The silver lock is worth 15 gp.

**19. Closet.** This was once nothing more than a utility closet, but Madame began using it as a storage place for items she removed from her past victims that were too heavy or bulky to carry upstairs. The PCs find a suit of scale mail, two long swords, one battle axe, one footman's mace, and two shields (one is a *shield +1*). There is also a quantity of partially used torches, a brass lantern half-filled with oil, and a grappling hook with a length of rope attached to it.

## 20. Rat's Lair.

This room is a monument to decay. Great casks of grain and other commodities once lined the walls, but they have long since split and spilled their contents, or else were bored into by industrious rats. At the east end of the room lies a heap of old furniture, rotten to a point of uselessness.

Against the south wall stands a weather-beaten cupboard. One of its doors hangs by a single bent hinge. As you enter the room, you hear the sound of scurrying feet, probably rats. You see their red beady eyes peering at you from the dark corners and their shadows seem uncommonly large.

It only takes a moment for the PCs to discover the reason for this trick of the light.

**Giant rats (5):** INT semi-; AL NE; AC 7; MV 12, swim 6; HD  $\frac{1}{2}$ ; hp 4, 3 (x2), 2 (x2); THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg



1-3; SA disease; MR nil; SZ T (2' long); ML 7; XP 15; MM/300.

**Wharf rats (pack):** INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 15, swim 3; HD 4; hp 26; THAC0 n/a (see below); #AT n/a (see below); SA disease; MR nil; SZ M-L (see below); ML 4; XP 175; MM/300.

This pack of wharf rats (led by the giant rats), is bolder than most and attacks up to four PCs. They are attracted here because of the discarded human remains which Madame Tuvache occasionally dumps into the underground canal (area 21). All rats fear fire and may be driven off by it, but if backed into a corner they attack with renewed ferocity. A rat bite has a 5% chance of causing a debilitating disease unless the victim makes a save vs. poison.

A pack of wharf rats attacks like a single entity rather than a group of individual monsters, therefore the somewhat inflated statistics given above. It is assumed that this pack can cover a 10' x 10' area, automatically inflicting 4 hp damage per round to anyone caught within their area of effect. Up to two victims may be included in this area, but the rats have the option of dividing into two groups, halving all attack, hit, and hit point values. Weapons have little effect on a pack of rats (1 hp damage per hit), but area of effect attacks (flaming oil, certain spells) cause normal damage. When a pack's hp are reduced to 0, it is assumed that the pack is dispersed and unable to continue the attack (with an appropriate number of dead rats left behind). The wharf rats attack the smallest members of the party while the giant rats take on the bigger PCs.

If the rats are driven off, some of them flee through the cupboard door (mentioned in boxed text). Behind the cupboard is a secret door which leads to area 21 below.

The cupboard slides back, revealing a dark staircase leading into impenetrable darkness. You hear the sound of rushing water below.

If the room is thoroughly searched, the PCs find 22 gp in copper and silver coins, semiprecious stones, silver buttons, and the like.

**21. Canal Landing.** It is assumed in the following boxed text that the PCs have yet to experience the horrors of Madame Tuvache's machine. If they have, then it should not be too hard to

guess that the water wheel powers the puppet-works.

These stairs are much less steep than those leading to the cellar. These were obviously built at a different time than the house, but you cannot tell whether it was before or after. In any case, you soon reach the bottom, where you find a broad landing of cobblestones.

There is an underground canal here, but from Madame Tuvache's story, you had expected this. She did not tell you about the water wheel attached to the wall of the canal. The wheel turns a stout iron shaft which vanishes into a small pipe in the ceiling. The shaft leads up to the house.

The PCs are free to explore the canal, but without a boat or canoe, such an action could prove more dangerous than Madame Tuvache's house. The DM should feel free to fill the canals with large crocodiles, hordes of rats, and other nasty creatures, but these underground waterways are not detailed in this adventure.

A few stout blows of an axe damages the water wheel enough to prevent the machine from working. Likewise, a spear or other object could be used to jam it.

Jerretiere uses her *summon swarm* ability to summon a horde of wharf rats to attack any PCs here. The rats swim in through the canal.

## Second Floor

**DM Note:** When the machine is running, PCs can hear the piano in room 11 while in areas 22-27, because of the open balcony.

**22. Landing.** The stairs lead down 20' to area 4; the balcony overlooks the same area. There is nothing else of interest here unless the machine is in operation, in which case four warrior-puppets (see statistics on page 54) guard this area. If any PCs lean on either the balcony or stair railing, the wood must save vs. crushing blow (due to its age and poor condition) or break, dropping the PC to the floor below.

Jerretiere uses her *animate dead* ability to animate the warrior-puppets (see statistics on page 54), turning them into normal undead. Even if the PCs have already encountered and destroyed the puppets, the scattered parts are rejoined and rise up as 1HD undead.

## 23. The Kitchen.

Unlike many other rooms in this house, the kitchen has not been abandoned to the ravages of time. The knives and other utensils are clean and polished, the plates neatly stacked in the cupboard, the butcher table scrubbed to a hazy glow despite its many nicks and cuts. Although no fire burns in the fireplace, the room is warm.

## 24. Servants' Quarters.

This hall leads to the servants' quarters. All but one of the four doors lining the hall stands ajar. Through the open doorway of the nearest room, you see a simple bed, table, and chair. Judging by the thickness of the dust, it has been some time since anyone has visited this room.

Two other doors in this hall stand ajar as well, and open into rooms identical to the one described above. The fourth door and its room are described below.

### 24a. The Fourth Door.

Unlike the other three doors in this hall, this door is closed. The door handle has been broken off, and the door's facing has been badly gouged and scratched as if someone has tried to pry it open. The broad steel head of a crossbow bolt is sticking through the door, as though fired from behind the door at close range. You also find an iron pry bar lying on the floor here.

The door is nailed shut from within; an Open Doors roll with a -2 penalty opens it; it can also be hacked and smashed open with weapons, or it can be opened magically. Whoever opens the door must immediately save vs. breath weapon or take 1d4 hp damage from the crossbow trap protecting the door. Once the door is open and the trap sprung, read or paraphrase the following:

This room is identical in many respects to the other servant's quarters. However, directly in front of the door is a sprung crossbow strapped to a wooden chair. A thin thread connects the weapon's trigger to the door. On the floor by the bed is an empty water flask and a few stale crumbs of bread, while on the bed lies a pitiful, emaciated corpse. She might have been beautiful once, but now her cheekbones protrude hideously beneath her pale blue flesh. She wears ring mail armor and a fine warhammer lies next to her in the bed. Judging by the sickening odor of her rotting flesh, she hasn't been dead very long.

This former adventurer escaped from Madame's basement, but when she began to explore the house in search of the villain who had tried to kill her, she nearly lost her mind from all the horrors she encountered. At last, she took refuge in this small room and nailed the door shut. When Madame and Graves came prying at the door, the weakening warrior fired her crossbow at the closed door to drive them away. She then set the crossbow trap should they return while she slept. Too terrified to venture forth from what would be her tomb, she lingered for weeks, eventually dying of thirst and hunger.

She has 20 gp, 35 sp, and a *periapt of proof against poison* +1 (amethyst) in a pouch at her belt.

#### 25. Cloak Room.

This small closet is packed with clothes of all colors, designs, and sizes, boots beyond naming, and cloaks beyond counting stacked up like blankets on a trader's post shelf.

This room is usually locked. This is where Madame tosses items (for which she has no use) taken from her past victims. Among the more common cloaks, boots, clothing, and torches is a *short sword* +1 (unless it has been already been removed, see area 4).

**26. Dining Room.** Unless the machine is in operation, this room contains only a long table surrounded by high-backed chairs. But if the machine is running, read or paraphrase the following:

You have come upon a formal dining room, but now, only a strange parody of feasting is held here. The ten seats are occupied by formally dressed mannequins whose motions mimic those of people enjoying a fine dinner. Some appear to sip soup, while others mimic slicing food. The only sound is a horrible clicking and creaking. Looking closer, you notice that some of the faces of the mannequins have cracked and are peeling away, revealing beneath what looks to be naked human bone, yellowed with age.

PCs should make a horror check at this point. If they have already experienced the scene in the Grand Ballroom, allow a +2 bonus to their horror checks. The puppets have no attack values; any hit destroys them.

**27. The Balcony.** Anyone falling over the railing drops 20' to the floor of the Grand Ballroom (area 11) below. If the machine is in operation, PCs see the thin strong wires which support the puppets dancing below. If the PCs have yet to visit the Grand Ballroom, paraphrase the descriptions given at area 11. PCs should make a horror check when first viewing the dance of the puppets. If they have previously visited the Dining Room, allow a +2 bonus to their horror checks.

**28. The Gauntlet.** This hall is ordinary in most respects. However, whenever the machine is running the spears can be made to jab down from the ceiling. The spears descend from the ceiling slowly at first before rapidly gaining speed. Allow the PCs one round to react before they start suffering damage. The spears cover every square foot of the hall (running north and south), and the doors at the ends of the hall shut and lock before the spears descend. The jabbing of the spears is purely mechanical, based upon a pattern that cannot be changed, therefore rather than rolling to hit, every PC must save vs. breath weapon each round spent in the hall or suffer 1d6 hp damage (save for half damage). Unlike the puppets, there are too many spears for the PCs to unravel their pattern and avoid being hit. A good time for this trap to be sprung is when the PCs are trying to enter area 29.

Jerretiere's great Strength allows her to shut the doors even if they have been propped open, and she can lock all four doors to prevent the PCs' escape (see "The Nightmare Has Only Begun"). At the same time, her control of the spears is based upon a directed attack rather than a mechanical pattern, therefore every PC must save vs. breath weapon each round spent in the hall or suffer 2d6 hp damage (save for half damage).

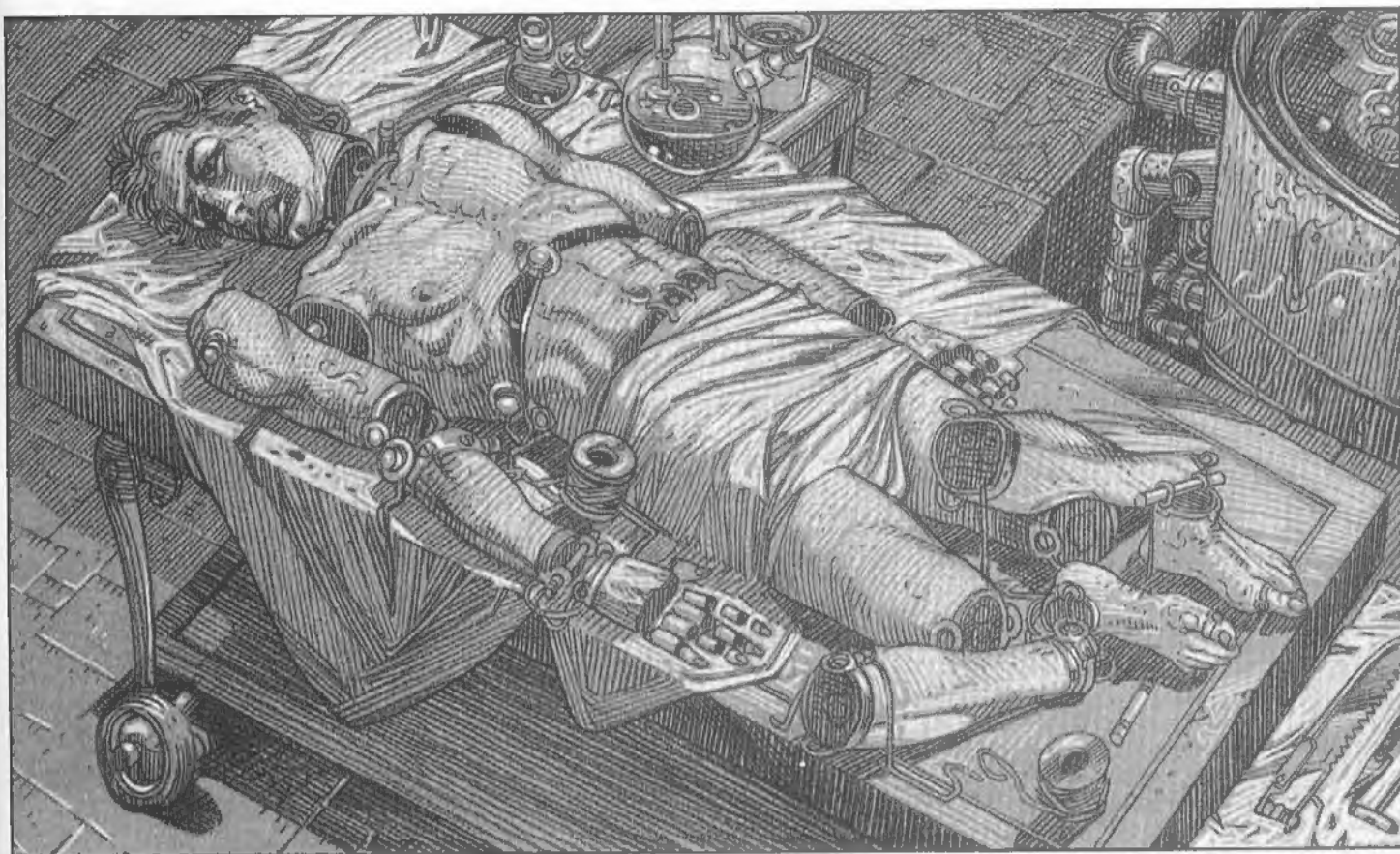
**29. The Control Room.** This door is locked. Read the following:

This room is the heart of the house; here is where everything is controlled. On the north wall is a vast array of switches, bells, and levers, the complexity of which is beyond imagining. Only a small bed provides any comfort for the occupant of this room, but the room is well stocked with bread, wine, and water, as if in preparation for a siege. Overhead, all sorts of wheels, gears, and gizmos turn endlessly, churning up a mind-numbing mechanical drone.

As described, every mechanical action of the house is controlled from this room. Here, the puppets can be made to dance in the Grand Ballroom, and here is where Madame Tuvache makes her last stand. She has stocked the room with food and drink to last her for three days should the PCs prove difficult.

The house is powered by a water wheel in the basement. This is attached to a shaft which runs up to the attic (shaft is visible on the maps, beside the staircase leading from area 4 to 22). The shaft and water wheel are also the Achilles heel of the house; if one of these is destroyed, the house ceases to function. A total of 200 hp physical damage must be delivered to the mechanism of the house before it malfunctions (this does not apply to the water wheel, which can be destroyed by a few blows from an axe).

This room also provides the only access to the attic, by way of a spiral staircase. In all other parts of the house, the meshing of gears and wheels is too thick for anyone to pass through. If it seems that the PCs are about to get into this room, Madame reluctantly retreats up the stairs to the attic and hides among the clothes in the Storage Room (area 35).



**30. Preservation and Rejuvenation Room.** The door is not locked, so the PCs can dive in here to escape the spears at area 28.

A charnel house smell combined with the scent of powerful chemicals pervades the air here. An attempt has been made to cover the smell with perfumes, but this only intensifies the sickening odor.

To your left is a long table upon which lies a human corpse. The poor man looks like he was about forty when he died. He has been dismembered, cut apart at every joint. His eyes are open and his black tongue protrudes from between his clenched teeth. Behind the table, set against the wall, is a cabinet.

The north side of the room is dominated by a large tub filled with some vile chemical. It bubbles and reeks continuously, rolling like water set to boil, but without any fire to heat it. Large solid objects roll in the murky liquid.

The tub of chemicals is used for pre-

serving the dismembered corpses. The PCs can safely touch the chemicals for short periods of time (less than one round); however, prolonged unprotected exposure acts as a weak contact poison (onset 2 rounds; 1-4/0) until washed away. If the PCs attempt to fish one of the "solid objects" from the tub, they discover more dismembered human remains. If any PCs are killed during the adventure and the surviving PCs escape without stopping Madame Tuvache and then return at a later date, they might find some parts of their friends in the tub.

If the PCs look beneath the table they find a carpenter's box containing an assortment of tools similar to those used by veterinarians. The corpse has a gold tooth worth 15 gp (if the PCs are truly sick and desperate for money). The PCs may also investigate a cupboard hanging from the west wall. This cupboard contains an assortment of pickled treasures from Madame's former victims, small mementos to remind her of past victories. In glass jars of murky liquid (which must be shaken to reveal their contents) are three eyeballs, a

nose, an ear, and two fingers. There are also four porcelain vials of poison, types C, H, L, and O.

The cabinet contains several pairs of rubber gloves and a rubber apron. There is also a bucket and a mop; the bucket is filled with water which can be used to clean the preserving chemicals from exposed flesh.

Jerretiere uses her *animate dead* ability to create zombies from the two corpses (on the table and in the tub) in this room. The magic of the animation knits together the separate parts of the corpses to form them into complete zombies. The zombies attack anyone entering this room.

**Zombies (2):** INT non-; AL N; AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 12 each; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SD see below; MR nil; SZ M; ML special; XP 65; MM/373.

Zombies are immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and cold-based spells. They always attack last in the round, and they attack until destroyed or turned.



### 31. Marble Hall.

The floor here is made of polished white marble. The southern wall is painted to resemble a classical temple lined with marble columns. At either end of the hall stand fine statues, one of a man, the other of a woman. Both wear simple tunics and carry shepherds' crooks. Behind each statue is a window shrouded in dark somber cloth.

Jerretiere is able to use her *animate object* ability on one of the statues. Once animated, the statue attacks for 12 rounds (spell's duration) or until it suffers enough damage to reduce it to rubble.

**Animated statue:** INT non-; AL N; AC 2; MV 6; HD 4+8; hp 40; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 3-18; MR nil; SZ M; ML special; XP 270.

### 32. Madame's Boudoir.

This bedroom obviously belongs to the Mistress of the house, as is evident by the richness of the furniture and the lack of dust and spider webs. But despite the frilly pink laces, dust covers, and profusion of interesting knickknacks, brushes, and combs, nothing can dispel the overwhelming horror and madness of this room. In every corner is propped a rigid human corpse, smartly dressed but smiling hideously. It appears that some have been dressed to resemble the portraits which decorate the walls.

This bedroom was once reserved for important guests, and some of their paintings adorn the walls. Among the other less-noteworthy portraits hangs a dark depiction of Marie Renier, deceased mother of Jacqueline Renier, lord of Richemulot. When Araby married Renault Tuvache, she took this room as her own. The brushes are made of ivory and worth 75 gp as a set. There is also a silver hand-mirror worth 55 gp. This room has its own small library, but none of the books deal with arcane subjects of interest to PC wizards or priests. On one shelf is Madame's beloved book about clockmaking, and an examination of it reveals her technical notes scrawled in the margin. Unlike the fireplace in room 16, a fire can safely be built here to warm the room. The chimney was bricked up below this level.

### 33. Children's Room.

Toys lay scattered across the floor of this room, dusty blocks and dark-eyed dolls give silent testimony to the sanity and life which once thrived in this house. The southern wall has been fancifully painted with dragons and knights, and the short but richly-carved canopy bed was never meant to hold an adult. Behind the bed, and partially hidden by its drapes, is a child's drawing scrawled upon the wall of a stick man being beheaded.

This was Renault Tuvache's room when he was a child, and Araby had hoped to use it for her children as well. The gruesome picture described above was drawn by Renault when he was 10 years old, after he witnessed an execution. Renault would not let anyone erase his drawing, for it served as a reminder of what happens to those who are weak.

### The Attic & Clock Tower

**34. The Attic Walkway.** The attic is accessed by way of the spiral staircase in room 29. The stairs let onto a low walkway surrounded entirely by clockwork machinery. Only the narrow spaces indicated on the map are open enough to allow anyone to travel freely. Any attempt at movement within the machinery is extremely slow (MV 1) when the machine is stopped, and impossible when the machine is running. If melee takes place in the attic walkways while the machine is running, Dexterity checks must be made every round to avoid stumbling into the machinery. Anyone who falls into, or is caught in the machinery while it is running, must save vs. death magic every round or be crushed to death. Even if the save is made, the PC automatically suffers 5-20 hp damage.

Peep holes have been drilled into the floor in most areas of the walkways, allowing Madame and Graves to keep track of the PCs' progress on the second floor. The PCs have the same chance to notice the peep holes as if noticing concealed doors.

Jerretiere attacks anyone passing through this area. The gears, bars, and rods swing out to smash intruders for 1d12 hp damage.

### 35. Storage Room.

This room is filled with racks and racks of moldy old clothes. Although they must have once been the latest fashions, they have long since fallen out of style and been devoured by moths. So extensive is this collection of clothes that you cannot see anything except what is directly ahead and above.

This room is directly beneath the clock. As you look up, you see the clockwork mechanism high above you, where a long brass pendulum swings ponderously over your heads. There is a ladder in the northeast corner of the room leading up to a platform surrounding the clockwork mechanism.

As stated, visibility is limited to what is directly ahead and above the PCs, unless they make an effort to part the clothes hanging on the racks and peer into other aisles. A round window in the southern wall allows a small amount of light into the room, but it is too small for adult human PCs to pass through. Only a child or a halfling could use this as an escape hatch, but the window could be opened so that the PCs can scream for help, not that anyone would hear. If Madame Tuvache is driven from room 29, she takes refuge here. If the PCs climb up to area 36 without finding her, she sneaks out and locks the door, trapping them in the clock tower.

**36. Clock Platform.** This narrow wooden platform completely surrounds the clockwork mechanism, allowing access for repair and cleaning. The platform is 20' above room 35. The clock operates independently from the house; it is not powered by the water wheel in the basement. In the southeast and northwest corners hang the large brass weights which drive the mechanism of the clock; each one weighs over 200 lbs. and would crash through all floors if the chain were somehow broken. The ladder continues up 20' to The Belfry.

Jerretiere uses her *summon swarm* ability to summon a cloud of bats to attack PCs entering this area. The bats confuse and blind the PCs, forcing them to make a Dexterity check to avoid falling off the platform or the ladder.

### 37. The Belfry.

Your entrance onto this platform disturbs the small rookery infesting this belfry. The birds erupt in a squawking cloud of black feathers, momentarily blinding you. As the birds pour out of the belfry, you see the large iron bell which tolls the hours, suspended from a beam in the roof. A gear connected to the clock below turns a crank which rings the bell.

From the height of the belfry you see the city spread out below you, and the silver ribbon of the river winding into the distance.

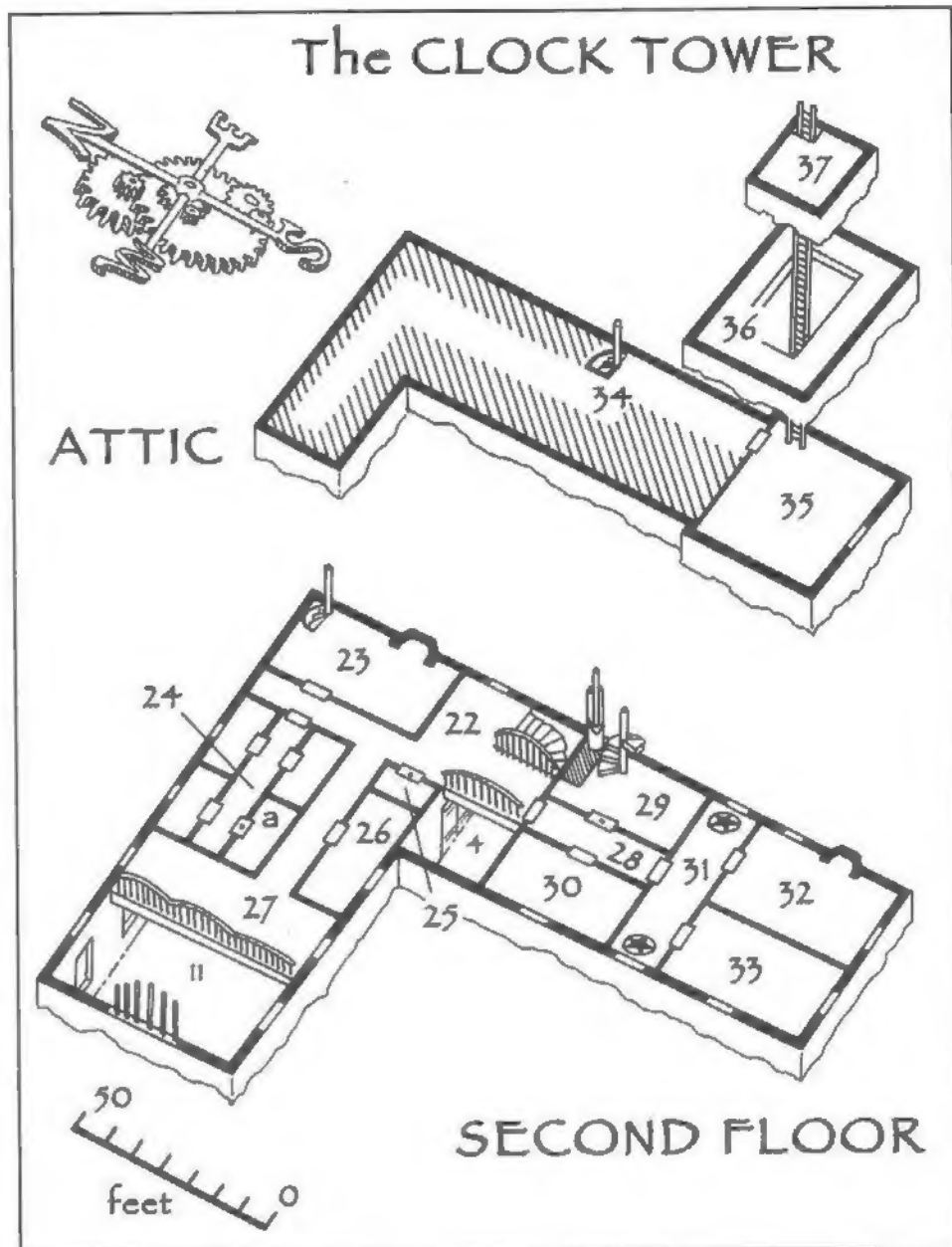
Anyone inside the belfry when the bell tolls must save vs. death magic or be deafened for 1d6 turns.

### Concluding the Adventure

The purpose of the adventure is to escape Madame's mad trap. When the PCs have done this, the adventure is ended (for the moment). If the PCs defeat Madame Tuvache and capture her, she appears harmless but then suddenly lashes out with her poisoned dagger. She has come to believe that her death will only make her more powerful. She is correct (see "The Nightmare Has Only Begun").

It is unlikely that the PCs can slay Jerretiére the Greater Animator. They can drive the spirit out by destroying the house but to actually destroy the spirit requires the use of spells too powerful for a party of this level. Award surviving PCs half value XPs for Jerretiére if they destroy the house to drive her spirit out; also award 500 XPs over and above normal awards for monsters defeated and exceptional play.

The PCs may take (without consequence) any items of value from the house, but if they go around trying to sell poisons, they might attract unwanted attention. If word of the powers of silver-mercurium reaches Jacqueline Renier, the PCs could very well come to the attention of the Lord of Richemulot. She may wish to "acquire a sample" of this virulent poison, as well as find out where the PCs purchased it. As can be imagined, the discovery of a poison especially toxic to lycanthropes would be cause for her concern. Of even greater concern is the appearance of a powerful new evil force in Richemulot. Jacqueline Renier may approach the PCs about destroying this new evil,



since they were the ones who released it. Jerretiére continues to grow in power after the adventure unless her spirit is driven from the estate or the house is destroyed. She uses Graves to lure new victims to the estate, or if he was slain, she rings the clock tower bell at odd times to attract the bold and curious. If the house is destroyed, Jerretiére is driven from the estate. She assumes the role of a Greater Animator and leaves the area in search of abused wives or discontented girls to "protect" and to feed upon. Ω